

Amendments to the Claims

1. (Amended) A computerized method of providing billing information to a billing portal, comprising:
  - (a) receiving, over a communications network, a request for ~~at least summary-billing information from a billable entity, that is the request~~ being automatically generated by the billing portal in response to an action by ~~a the~~ billable entity associated with the billing portal;
  - (b) upon the request of step (a), requesting, over the communications network in response to step (a), at least the summary, billing information from a supplier of the ~~summary-billing~~ information;
  - (c) upon the request of step (b), receiving, over the communications network, at least the summary-billing information from the supplier of the summary-billing information; and
  - (d) upon the receipt of step (c), transmitting, the billing information over the communications network, at least the summary-billing information and detailed billing contact information, the detailed billing contact information for the billing portal then allowing the billable entity to access ~~detailed billing information from a supplier of the detailed the~~ billing information.
2. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising, prior to step (a), providing software to the billing portal that ~~in response to an action by a upon receiving a request from a~~ billable entity, ~~associated with the billing portal, exclusively directs the performance of actions of the billing portal causes the~~ billing portal to transmit a request for ~~at least summary the~~ billing information associated with step (a) and to receive ~~at least the summary the~~ billing information ~~and the detailed billing contact information associated with step~~ (d).

3. (Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the step of providing software further comprises the steps of transmitting, over the computer network, the software to the billing portal to effect delivery and installation of the software.
4. (Amended) ~~The Method~~ of claim 3, wherein the delivery, installation, and operation of the provided software is automatic with respect to other human and machine activity at the billing portal.
5. (Amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the software ~~is embodied~~ as comprises one contiguous portion of dynamic HTML.
6. (Amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the software ~~is embodied~~ as comprises one contiguous portion of JavaScript.
7. (Amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the software is uncompressed and ~~contiguously embodied in~~ comprises less than 80 bytes of information.
8. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the ~~detailed-billing contact~~ information comprises a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) that directs access to ~~the detailed~~ detailed-billing contact information located on the Internet network.
9. (Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the detailed billing contact information comprises an encrypted Uniform ~~Respire~~ Resource Locator (URL) that authenticates the identity of the billable entity ~~accessing information~~ addressable by the Uniform Resource Locator.
10. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising, prior to step (b), providing software to the supplier of ~~summary the~~ the billing information that ~~in response to a request for summary billing information in~~ upon the receiving of step (b), directs the supplier to transmit over a communications network ~~summary the~~ the billing information in step (c).

11. (Amended) A computerized method of providing billing information to a billing portal, comprising:

- (a) receiving, over a communications network, a request for at least summary for billing information, the request being automatically generated by the billing portal in response to an action by a billable entity associated with the billing portal; automatically generated by the billing portal in response to an action by a billable entity associated with the billing portal;
- (b) upon the request of step (a), requesting, over the communications network, in response to step (a), at least the summary-billing information from a supplier of the summary-billing information;
- (c) upon the request of step (b), receiving, over the communications network, at least the summary-the billing information from the supplier of the summary-billing information in at least a first one of a plurality of different data formats and translating the first data format into a predetermined data format; and;
- (d) translating the received data into a predetermined data format; and
- (de) transmitting the translated billing data to the billing portal, over the communications network, to the billing portal, at least the summary billing information in the predetermined data format and detailed billing contact information for then allowing the billable entity to access detailed-the billing information from a supplier of the detailed billing information.

12. (Amended) A computerized method of providing billing information to a billing consolidator, comprising:

- (a) receiving, over a communications network, a request for billing information, the request being automatically generated by the billing consolidator in response to an action by a billable entity associated with the billing consolidator; receiving, over a communications network, a request for at least summary billing information associated with a billable entity from a billing consolidator;

- (b) upon the request of step (a), requesting, over the communications network in response to step (a), at least the summary-billing information from a supplier of the summary-billing information;
- (c) upon the request of step (b), receiving, over the communications network, at least the summary the billing information from the supplier of the summary-billing information; in at least a first one of a plurality of different data formats and translating the first data format into a predetermined data format; and
- (d) translating the received data into a predetermined data format; and
- (de) transmitting, over the communications network, the translated data to the billing consolidator; at least the information requested in step (a) in the predetermined data format.

- 13. (Amended) The method of claim 12 further comprising, prior to step (a), providing software to the billing consolidator that upon receiving the request from a billing entity, causes ~~directs the performance of actions of the billing~~ consolidator to receive at least the ~~summary-billing~~ information transmitted in step (de).
- 14. (Amended) The method of claim 12 wherein the request of step (a) further comprises receiving a request for detailed billing contact information associated with a billable entity.
- 15. (Amended) The method of claim 12 wherein the request of step (b) further comprises a request for requesting detailed billing contact information associated with a ~~detailed~~ billable entity.
- 16. (Amended) The method of claim 12 wherein ~~step (a) further comprises requesting billing information associated with multiple billable entities and step (d) comprises transmitting billing information associated with multiple billable entities.~~ the billing entity is comprised of multiple billing entities.

17. (Amended) The ~~computerized~~ method of claim 12, wherein step (a) is ~~planned by the billing consolidator to occur~~ on a scheduled basis.
18. (Amended) The computerized method of claim ~~14~~12, wherein step (a) is planned by the billing consolidator to occur on a periodic basis.
19. (Amended) A system for providing billing information, comprising:
  - a host computer for communicating over a communications network with a billing portal and a supplier of ~~summary~~ billing information;
  - a software program ~~including an applications programming interface enabling other software to direct behavior of the software program in a programmable manner, the software program adapted for executing on the host computer adapted to:~~
    - receiving a request for at least summary billing information from the billing portal over the communications network from the billing portal;
    - upon receiving the request from the billing portal, requesting at least the summary billing information from a supplier of the billing information over the communication network from the supplier of the summary billing information in response to the received request from the billing portal;
    - upon requesting the billing information, receive receiving at least the summary the billing information from the supplier of the billing information over the communications network from the supplier of the summary billing information; and
    - upon receiving the billing information, transmitting at least the summary the billing information and detailed billing contact information to the billing portal over the communications network, to the billing portal, the billing portal allowing the a billable entity to access detailed the billing information as presented from a supplier of the detailed billing information.
20. (Amended) The system of claim 19 wherein the ~~behavior execution~~ of the software program is directed by other software executing locally with respect to the software program.

21. (Amended) The system of claim 19 wherein the ~~behavior~~execution of the software program is directed by other software executing remotely with respect to the software program.
22. (Amended) ~~The system of claim 19 wherein the software program is adapted to be stored onto computer readable media.~~ An article of manufacture having a computer-readable medium with instructions embodied thereon for performing the method of claim 19.
23. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 19 wherein the software program is adapted to be packaged, copied and purchased separately by each of a plurality of operators of the system.
24. (Amended) A method of supplying billing information to a billable entity associated with a billing portal comprising:
  - supplying software to a billing portal, ~~from a supplier; the information content of the software being independent of any attribute of the billing portal except for the presence of enabled communication functionality at the billing portal to enable~~ instructions for communication between the billing portal and the billable entity and between the billing portal and the a supplier of said software;
  - using the software interacting with the billable entity as a user interface to determine if the billable entity has registered with the billing portal, and further to prior registration of the billable entity and to perform registration if said prior registration has not occurred the billable entity has not previously registered; and;
  - the software communicating with the billable entity as a user interface and receiving account and billing information from the supplier that the software provides to the billable entity providing, via the billing portal, billing information received from a supplier of the billing information to the billable entity.

25. (New) A computerized method of providing consolidated billing information to a plurality of billable entities via a billing portal, the method comprising:

- a) providing a list of billing relationships between the billable entities and a plurality of suppliers of billing information;
- b) receiving, at the billing portal, requests for billing information from a plurality billable entities;
- c) automatically translating the received requests into translated requests having a format recognized by the suppliers of billing data;
- d) automatically transmitting the translated requests from the billing portal to at least one of the plurality of suppliers of the billing information;
- e) receiving, at the billing portal, the billing information in response from the at least one of the plurality of suppliers of the billing information; and
- f) presenting the billing information to at least one of the plurality of billable entities.

26. (New) The method of claim 25 wherein the received billing information is received in a plurality of formats.

27. (New) The method of claim 26 where the plurality of formats include at least one of OFX, IFX, HTML, and XML.

28. (New) The method of claim 27 wherein the received billing information is automatically translated into a common format.